

# Tradition spaces as indicators of community resilience

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## ABSTRACT

One of the effects of the construction of new large-scale settlements in suburban areas is the growing pressure on native settlements. This is because a lot of land and houses were acquired to build these new settlements. Physical and non-physical changes have the potential to change or even eliminate many of the native settlements due to the threat of land acquisition by developers who are building a new settlement. This research is intended to examine the contribution of the tradition of pilgrimage activities to the graves of community resilience against the threat of land acquisition by developers. This study used a qualitative approach through observation and interview techniques with community leaders and several other key persons in three native settlements that are in the midst of large-scale new settlement in Serpong area, Tangerang. The results showed that the inhabitants of native settlements can build their community resilience because they can carry out the tradition of pilgrimage to the graves of family and ancestors routinely until now. The tradition of pilgrimage functions as a community resilience mechanism because it is regularly carried out and involves all components of the inhabitants of the settlement as well as friendly forum with family members and neighbors who have moved and live outside the settlement. Thus the grave is a physical component that can be used as an indicator of the community resilience of native settlement inhabitants in an effort to respond to the threat of land acquisition by new settlement developers.

*Key words* : Native settlement, New settlement, Community resilience, Pilgrimage tradition, Graves.

## Introduction

The growth of cities across the globe is a phenomenon that has happened until now, and in a manner that it will continue to increase in the future (UN-Habitat III, 2017). In 2014, the number of residents living in urban areas was higher than the population living in rural areas, with a composition of 54% compared to 46%. With the current growth rate, it is estimated that in 2050 the number of residents living in urban areas around the world will reach 60% (UN DESA, 2014).

On the trend that lead to the phenomenal rise in the growth of large cities across the globe world to-

day, is that urban growth leads to the extension of urban space to suburban areas (Zhao *et al.*, 2009; Sauri *et al.*, 2011; Stan, 2013; Dadi *et al.*, 2016; Pozoukidou and Ntriankos, 2017; Zhao and Zhang, 2018).

The expansion of the area from urban to rural areas has had a direct impact on rural populations who previously occupied the original settlements, either positively or negatively. Among the positive effects is the development of entrepreneurship with the emergence of massive urban economic growth that has improved the quality of life of indigenous people (Pozoukidou and Ntriankos, 2017; Bagheri and Tousi, 2018). While the negative impacts which

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arise are more and have been much elaborated on through the results of previous studies, such as the many indigenous people who were displaced and became more impoverished farmers without adequate skills, and the loss of pre-existing livelihood (Gebregziabher *et al.*, 2014; Haregeweyn *et al.*, 2012,) Isolation of areas that cut off social life (Dupras *et al.*, 2016), all of which lead to the development of peri-urban areas under the dominance of government control and less involvement of native communities (Guo *et al.*, 2017).

Although many negative impacts occurred, the occurrence of the phenomenon of suburban growth is an inevitable necessity (Rose, 2014). Many previous research results offered a formula for how the growth of cities in the periphery should be done. Such as the potential to bring the concept of sustainable development related to the development of new towns in sub-urban areas (Ischak *et al.*, 2018), growth of peri-urban regions which must involve heterogeneous mosaic of rural, urban and natural systems where urban areas can have different degrees of prevalence and spatial configuration (Moreira *et al.*, 2016), the need for integrated management and planning involving all stakeholders, especially all community groups in the region (Li *et al.*, 2016; Sahana *et al.*, 2018). Or the need to involve potential sources of strength in the form of social capital that creates opportunities for integration and minimizes segregation (Critelli and Musella, 2016).

To maintain social, economic, and ecological values as a component of continuing development, the existence of native settlements must be directed at efforts to build community resilience in order to respond to the developing threat of new settlement in the periurban area.

The understanding of resilience in the context of indigenous peoples who face the threat of new settlement will be more appropriate if it is brought in a community context because community resilience is an intersection between social, economic, and environmental factors, which are basically manifestations of sustainable development (Wilson, 2012; Stumpp, 2013). Referring to Zhang, C. (2015) what is meant by indigenous people is a community that occupies a relatively independent area where social activities and social relations still occur intensively and still hold spiritual values. Social capital owned by local communities as a component of sustainable development, if combined with economic culture and place characteristics is a very supportive

strategy in shaping community survival. Community resilience influenced by two factors, internal regarding the condition and socio-economic potential of the community, external in the form of rules and spatial planning (Sagala *et al.*, 2015). In the context of rural settlements facing urban growth, defense in the economic, social and cultural contexts still emerges, while political and natural resilience is more vulnerable (Wilson, 2018).

As a reflection of the native settlements in rural areas that have existed for generations, native settlement in the Serpong region possibly have values in the form of traditions and hereditary culture that are still held by the community today. That is because in the context of protecting and enhancing the quality of the environment within a framework of sustainable development, it is necessary to involve local communities and the traditions and culture that they contain (Adom, 2017; Tang and Jardine, 2016). The main character of rural communities that must be prioritized is the close relationship between community members. The ongoing tradition shows that the closeness of the relationship is the basis for the formation of cultural sustainability which is used as capital in responding to external threats, and the adaptation effort from within so that it takes place dynamically (Daskon, 2010).

One component that influences the spatial in each original settlement is ritual activities related to tradition (Sukanya, 2016). The authenticity of spiritual traditions manifested through rituals and consumption of texts, material objects, and spaces, one of which is in the form of a grave (Moufahim and Lichrou, 2019). The allotment of land as a grave can be observed by the social characteristics of the inhabitants of the settlements. The grave as one form of cultural heritage is informal, where current activities reflect the social characteristics of local communities and have an impact on the economy and quality of life of the surrounding communities (Puspitasari *et al.*, 2012; Barrere, 2016).

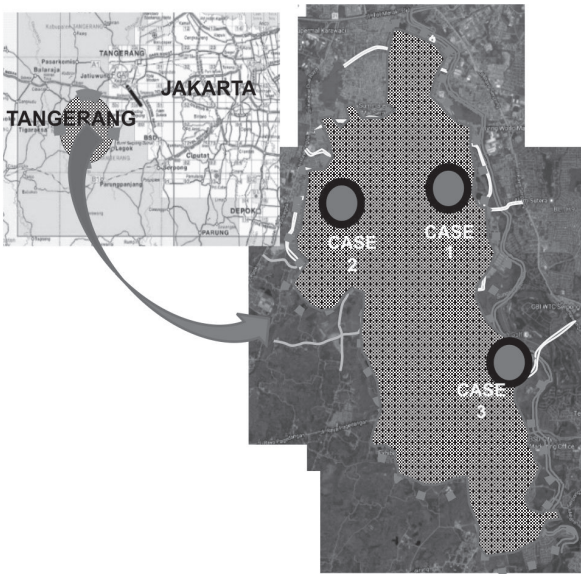
Pre various studies have looked more at the context of the tomb of a unique character with the traditional activities and rituals of pilgrimage that occur at certain times. In this study, graves review is not a special artifact, but it is an inherent element in the inhabitants of a settlement. While the context of the discussion of the tradition of pilgrimage by the community is put in context as part of the community's efforts to survive the threat of changes in the settlement environment they occupy. Thus

the tradition of pilgrimage is placed as a motivation as well as a community mechanism to form community resilience in an effort to survive the threat of land tenure by new settlement developers.

## Materials and Methods

### The Study Area

The study area consists of three native settlements based on enclave settlement categories, located in Tangerang Regency, near Jakarta (Fig. 1). Each case bordered by a different new settlement developer. Case 1 borders with a developer named Paramount Land, case 2 borders with a developer named Summarecon, and case 3 borders with a developer named Sinar Mas Land. Case 1 and Case 2 are in the new town area of Gading Serpong, while case 3 is in the new town area of Bumi Serpong Damai.



**Fig. 1.** Research area, 3 native settlements surrounding Gading Serpong New Town and BSD City,  
 Source : Modification of Google Earth, 2018

### The Study method

The study was conducted with a qualitative approach as a stage to explore the motivation of residents in conducting pilgrimage activities, as well as exploring other spiritual values inherent and believed by the community, related to pilgrimage activities to the tombs located in the native settlement

environment. This stage is carried out through observing the traditional pilgrimage activities that are still running today, and through interviewing techniques of several components of society, including community leaders and residents of the graves pilgrimage activities.

Interview with community leaders is intended to obtain information about the tradition of pilgrimage in terms of history, the background of pilgrimage time selection, and history related to pilgrimage times that apply to the present. The second interview was conducted with residents and former residents of settlements. What is meant by residents of settlements is those who represent people who still survive to remain in the original settlement studied. Whereas what is meant by former residents of settlements is the perpetrators of pilgrimage activities that are part of the community that once inhabited the settlements. Now they have moved because their homes and land already bought by developers.

The final stage of the research is the validation of the research findings through a Forum Group Discussion (FGD) by inviting community leaders and several key persons in such cases. FGDs conducted in three settlements which used as case study. The locus of research conducted on three original settlements that were directly affected by the development of the area by three different developers in Serpong, Tangerang.

## Results

The grave is one of the spatial components that are inseparable from a native settlement area. Based on the hierarchy and position of grave of the settlements that were made, there are three graves typologies, namely the public grave, family grave, and the tomb of a rescued community figure. The number and distribution of graves in each settlement case are different. In case 1 there is 1 public grave and 6 family grave areas which are spread around the house in each residential area. In case 2 there is 1 public grave and 1 family grave. Whereas in case 3 we found 2 family graves, 1 sacred grave, and 1 public grave (Table 1).

The development of the territorial landscape due to large-scale land purchases by developers who bought residential land except for tombs, caused the position of public graves to be different in all three cases (Fig. 2).

The existence of a family grave leads to the social

**Table 1.** Amount of graves and the characters of graves spatial configuration

	Family Grave	Public Grave	Sacred Graves	Spatial Configuration
Case 1	6	1	-	Family graves : spread in settlement areas Public graves : on the outskirts of settlements
Case 2	2	1	-	Family graves : spread in settlement areas Public graves : on the outside of settlements
Case 3	2	1	1	Family graves : spread in settlement areas Public graves : on the outside of settlements Sacred graves : on the outskirts of settlements
Sum	10	3	1	

status of the buried person. In all cases it was found that those who used family graves were descended from people who had social status as community leaders of their time. Meanwhile, community members who do not have special social status will be buried in public graves. This phenomenon is a reflection of the wisdom of local values which is the result of the agreement of all components of the settlement community. One of the most significant is that currently those who are entitled to use pub-

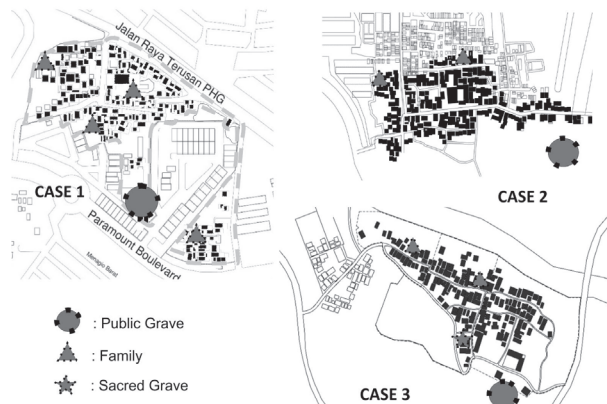
lic graves are members of the community who live in settlements.

Thus, community members who have moved are not entitled to use and can not be buried in public graves located in settlements. In the sacred graves, it has unique characteristics that are the grave of community leaders who are the founders of settlements as well as the first bearers of Islam in the Serpong and surrounding areas.

From the character and distribution of graves, the observation of routine activities occur as follows (Table 2).

### Discussion

In the context of socio-spatial impact on community resilience, the existence of these three types of graves related to the symbolic role inherent in a grave. The symbolic role of the grave appears in two forms that have an impact on the formation of two kinds of territory, namely community territory, and inter-community territory. Community territory comes in two forms, namely social activities that unite inhabitants of all settlements through gathering activities (cases 1, 2, and 3). While cross-com-



**Fig. 1.** Distribution and position of three types of graves in three native settlements used as research cases

**Tabel 2.** The characters of each types of graves in study area

	Activities	Community involved	Frequency
Family Grave	Burial event Pilgrimage	Neighbor and family scoupe Family	In anytime Before ramadlan or first day in Iedul Fitri
Public Grave	Burial event Pilgrimage	Neighbor Neighbor and the former of inhabitants that were moved in other location	In anytime Before ramadlan or first day in Iedul Fitri
Sacred Graves	Pilgrimage	Settlement scoupe and cross settlement even come from other areas	Once of year



munity territories, appear in the form of graves as a unifying media between the inhabitants of the settlement who still survive with the inhabitants of the settlement who have moved outside the village (case 1 and case 2).

Gathering activities are carried out routinely before and during Eid. Thus, the activity raises and maintains the sense of place, and sense of community. At special times, public graves created as territories of space that involve large areas that are united against the background of family attachment through the grave (Figure 2). While on another scale, the emergence of pride as part of a village that is almost found in all informants in all cases, indicates that the grave in all cases (public and family graves) still bears the role of symbolism of a sense of place.

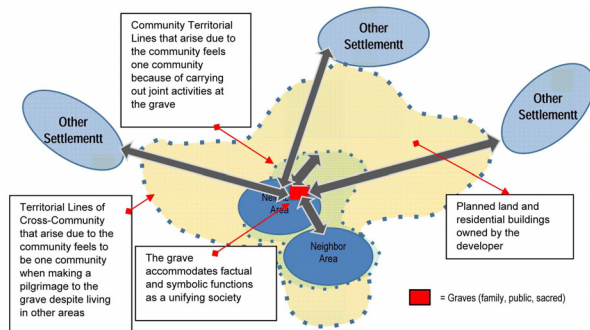


Fig. 2. Illustration of grave function as a unifying symbol of residents occupying scattered areas due to land acquisition by development

With the regular forum meeting that occurs routinely between residents who still survive in the settlement with residents who have moved, that is a social phenomenon, one which impacts on the decision of residents to stay afloat. Thus, neighborhood and kinship ties to this day are still intertwined even though they are not already in a residential area, it remains a factor that strengthens the values as a community (sense of community).

From the two territorial formations, as shown in Figure 2, the findings show that family ties and neighborhoods are still growing within the territory and outside the village, which in turn is a reflection of the still-growing sense of community. In the context of defense theory, this directly shows a capital for the growth of community survival (McManus, et al., 2012) (Fig. 3).

The allotment and distribution of land to function as a grave, in addition to affecting the morphology

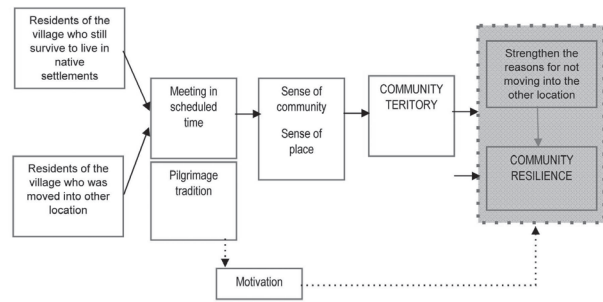


Fig. 3. Schema of the phenomenon of the meeting that underlies the formation of community resilience that is triggered by the territory of the community between residents who have survived and residents who have moved due to land acquisition by the developer

of settlements, also has a symbolic meaning. Data from interviews with informants revealed that one of the factors that became the basis of community consideration for surviving and not moving into another location by not selling land or houses to developers was due to psychological attachment to parents who had died and were buried in the village. Thus, the general grave has two roles, namely the functional and symbolic roles. The functional role places the public grave as a social facility that is provided and utilized by inhabitants of the settlement because it is intended only for individual inhabitants of the settlement. If an individual or family has moved outside the settlement, they are not entitled to use the public graves. This agreement is a significant factor for settlement inhabitants who choose to survive by not selling their houses to developers.

### Conclusion

The existence of graves in and around the native settlement shows that community values are still alive among the inhabitants of the settlement. The ongoing tradition of pilgrimage, whether carried out at family graves, public graves and sacred graves, is a forum for all inhabitants to meet with families and neighbors of one settlement, as well as those who have moved into another location as a result of their houses and land being purchased by the developer. The community meeting forum at the graves directly raises attachment to the ancestors which in turn raises the sense of community and sense of place. These three things turned out to be the main components of the native settlement

residents to survive. As long as there is a grave and the tradition of pilgrimage will exist. Therefore the community resilience used as a guide for the community to respond to the threat from the new settlement developers.

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